CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Hungary

SUBJECT Government Aid to Scientific Research and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

PLACE ACQUIRED

DATE ACQUIRED BY SOURCE

DATE OF INFORMATION

50X1

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

50X1

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SOURCE

50X1

1. The present regime in Hungary has supported scientific educational institutions and research much more generously than was the case before 1944. In 1949, the government opened the Miskolc Natural Science University; in 1950, the Veszprem Heavy Industry Chemistry University; and in 1951, the Polytechnic University of Budapest was given new buildings located at Vampalota, formerly Ferenc Jozsef bridge now Szabadsag hid (freedom bridge). Institutes prepared budgets which they submitted to the respective ministries; university institutes submitted their budgets to the Ministry of Education and the research institutes to the Ministry of Light Industry, or the Ministry of Heavy Industry. Newly established institutes had an advantage over the older institutes because they were given the most up-to-date equipment. Grants differed from institute to institute; often two institutes in the same scientific field received different grants. For instance, the Physical Chemistry Institute of the Polytechnic University and the Physical Chemistry Institute of the Eoetvoes Lorand University did not receive the same amount. The size of the grant depended on the condition of the institute (old institutes got less money), the type of research (industrial research received much greater support than purely theoretical), and finally it depended on the success with which the head of the institute was able to defend his request.

2. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences served as the central clearing point for all research; it supervised and coordinated all scientific research programs. The Academy was actually under the direct control of the Ministry of Education; its budget, plans, etc, were submitted to the Ministry for approval. Officers of the Academy of Sciences, included Dr Istvan Rusznyak, Professor of Internal Medicine (President) and Dr Tibor Erdey-Gruz, Professor of Physical Chemistry (Secretary) 50X1

CLASSIFICATION SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

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There was a board of directors consisting of six members, two of whom were Professors Gombas and Novobatzky, physicists. I do not know the names of any of the other members. The Academy consisted of two branches, humanities and natural sciences; the latter was divided into chemistry, mathematics, and physics. Medicine and biology were also represented, but I am not sure how they were fitted in. Each division elected its own leader. Members were formerly 50X1 elected by the Academy itself, but [redacted] they were appointed by the Ministry of Education and it was considered a signal honor to receive an appointment. The Academy of Sciences was located in a new six-story building at No 2 Geza Street, District 5, Budapest. The lecture hall and reception rooms were on Roosevelt Square near the famous chain bridge.

3. By far the greatest importance of the Academy lay in the fact that it exercised almost complete control over all research in Hungary. All plans for research, both academic and industrial (industrial research was favored), had to be submitted to the Academy for approval. In this way, duplication was avoided and control centralized, but the delay, waste of time, and administrative arbitrariness resulted in much dissatisfaction among the individual research workers. If the Academy felt that a field of research was important, it created an institute of its own to carry out the work and provided the necessary staff and instruments; the Atomic Physics Institute and the Electronmicroscope Institute are examples of institutes set up in this fashion. Institutes prepared five-year research plans which they submitted to the Academy of Sciences which had to approve not only the field of research, but the subject, the number of scientists involved, and the expected results, as well as the equipment and materials necessary. The Academy had to be informed in writing every three months about the progress of the project. Research was done by a group of scientists under the leadership of the most experienced of the group. Industrial research institutes (sugar, leather, metal, distillery, textile, organic chemical, pharmaceutical) worked on the solution of problems arising in their particular field. Leaders of these institutes were specialists with several years of practical experience as engineers or chemists. In the university institutes, research was directed by the professor or associate 50X1 professor. [redacted] note: A direct parallel in academic rank between European countries and the USA is not possible; an approximate equivalent is given here.] The Academy also subsidized certain graduate students and dozents in their research by awarding stipends to promising researchers.

4. In addition to its direct control of scientific research, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences promoted public lectures, published scientific reports, and sponsored Academy Week. Academy Week, which occured every year in early December, was somewhat of an intellectual feast attended by local and foreign representatives. In 1951, Rienecker (fnu), a professor from the East Zone of Germany, was an honored guest. He spoke on free radicals and catalysis. The Academy was the supreme academic body of Hungary. For example, when the government abolished the degree of doctorate in 1950, the Academy intervened and the degree was restored. The Academy also appointed the committee for the examination of aspirants.

5. The Kossuth Prize (named in memory of Lajos Kossuth who led a revolt of the Hungarians in 1848) was presented yearly on March 15 by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for outstanding achievement in the field of science, scholarship or any other endeavor that

might benefit the state and society. The prizes ranged from 10 thousand to 20 thousand and even 50 thousand forints; sometimes several people received one prize in common. In addition to the Kossuth Prize, the Academy also gave prizes for academic achievements; these prizes were given each year during Academy Week, and ranged from 500 to five thousand forints. In 1951, prizes given for outstanding achievements in scientific research and scholarship amounted to 800 thousand forints.

6. I know nothing concerning a direct interchange of research data, effort, and/or personnel between the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the USSR Academy of Sciences. To my knowledge, the Academy of Sciences in Moscow did not exert any control over the institutes and research programs of the Hungarian Academy. No control of research projects by the Soviet Union was discernible. Soviet delegates occasionally visited a factory or an institute in Hungary. In 1950 or 1951, during Academy Week, Soviet scientists addressed the members. Dubinyin, a physical chemist, spoke on gas absorption.

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